South Carolina Virtual School Program Sponsor Newsletter

SCVSP Semester Dates

January 14 - May 2, 2008

March 3 - May 30, 2008

June 16 - August 13, 2008

Helpful Links/Tutorials

For video tutorials and information about the SCVSP visit our website at:
http://elearning.ed.sc.gov
and click on the student tab.

Contact Us

Dee Appleby - Director

dappleby@ed.sc.gov

About this Newsletter

Starting in March 2008, the South Carolina Virtual School Program (SCVSP) will issue a monthly newsletter to help keep participating schools informed of changes, updates, and other important information regarding the SCVSP. It is our hope that with this newsletter, we can better transmit the information that counselors, students, and schools need to be a successful with the program.

Each month we will highlight important dates and up-coming deadlines, as well as include information that we feel will be helpful to participating schools. Our newsletter will also highlight an SCVSP instructor as well as outstanding students.

Content Recovery VS. Initial Credit

The South Carolina Virtual School currently offers two types of courses: Initial Credit courses and Content Recovery Courses. During the registration process, many students and parents become confused as to the differences between the courses and may register for the wrong course.

An Initial Credit course is intended for a student that is attempting the course for the first time and has not previously taken the course.

A Content Recovery course is designed for students that have previously taken a course and did not receive credit for the course due to a non-passing score, excessive absences, etc. Students, parents and counselors can distinguish which course is a Content Recovery course by looking for courses with the abbreviation 'CR' added to the title (ie. English 3 CR).

Counselors should use caution when approving students for a course to make sure that the student has registered for the appropriate class. Prior to approving a student, please double check the title of the course and look for the abbreviation 'CR' added to the course title. If a student is not eligible for a Content Recovery course, do not approve the student and have them re-apply for the appropriate course. It is important that counselors verify that the course is correct for the student to ensure that the student is working in the correct class and avoid the need to drop a student after they have started working in a course.

Technology Assessment Information

When a student signs up for an account with the SCVSP, the student is provided with information about a Technology Assessment. The technology assessment is used by counselors as a benchmark to determine whether or not a student is prepared to take an online course. Counselors will be provided with the student's scores to determine how much additional help a student may need or whether or not the time is right for a student to take an online course.

The technology assessment seems to be an area of confusion with counselors, so please take note of the following information about the technology assessment.

- The Technology Assessment is to be used by counselors as a benchmark to determine the readiness of a student for an online course where the student will be required to know basic technological skills to be successful.

- If a student is approved to take a course by a counselor without taking the technology assessment, the student may begin their course without the assessment.

- There is no pass/fail designation for the test. If a student does poorly on the assessment, they may still be approved for a course by the counselor at the counselors discretion. The SCVSP does not deny anyone access to our courses based on the technology assessment.

- After a student has registered for an account with the SCVSP, please allow 2 business days for the Technology Assessment to be prepared for the student.

- Directions to take the assessment are displayed inside of Virtual School Administrator (VSA) for the student. The instructions include the website address of the assessment, username, password, and other important information about the assessment. Please have the student read these directions carefully before beginning an assessment.

- Remind students that once they begin an assessment, they should begin and end the assessment in one session to avoid issues.

- If a student has an issue logging in to take the assessment, please contact Tracy Sanders (tsanders@oconee.k12.sc.us). The assessment specialist will verify that the information is in the roster and report back to the counselor that the test is ready to begin.

Guidance Counselor Training

The South Carolina Virtual School offers training for Guidance Counselors twice per month via our online web-conferencing software (Elluminate Live!). The training will cover basic information about how to approve students in Virtual School Administrator (VSA) as well as how to help students register for courses in VSA. The web-based training will also offer time for general questions and answers and would be a great time to have all of your questions answered.

If you feel that you are in need of training or would like to have

someone at your school attend a training session, please check the up-coming training dates below and email Bradley Mitchell (BMitchell@ed.sc.gov) to register and to obtain login information.

Up-coming Guidance Counselor Training Dates and Times:

- Tuesday, March 18, 2008 - 1:00PM - 2:00PM
- Wednesday, April 2, 2008 - 1:00PM - 2:00PM
- Tuesday, April 15, 2008 - 1:00PM - 2:00PM

Final Exam Proctor Information

The South Carolina Virtual School requires that all final exams must be proctored by a certified teacher, counselor, or administrator. Online instructors will contact students, parents, and counselors prior to final exam dates to remind them of up-coming exams and give important exam information.

Students are responsible for scheduling a time and date during the final exam timeframe with a proctor of their choice.

All final exams are password protected and a password for the exam will only be supplied to the proctor that the student has selected. The proctor will also be required to fill out a proctor form, which will be forwarded to them by the instructor of the online course prior to the exam.

Final exams are offered the final week of every semester. Students are allowed to set their own date and time with their proctor, but this information needs to be shared with the online instructor so that the appropriate password and information can be sent to the proctor prior to the exam date.

Please be sure that the school sponsor checks their messages in our Virtual School Administration (VSA) system regularly to avoid missing important messages from online instructors. Instructors will contact counselors, parents, and students through VSA regularly, and will also send all final exam information through the messaging system in VSA.

End of Course Exam Information

South Carolina requires End of Course Exams (EOCE) for students in the following courses: Algebra 1/Math for the Technologies 2, English 1, Physical Science, and U.S. History and the Constitution. Students who are enrolled in one of these courses with the South Carolina Virtual School Program are required to take the appropriate exam for their course; however, schools are required to schedule and administer the appropriate End of Course exam to students. Please be sure that when planning for the End of Course Exams at your school that students taking any of the above courses with the SCVSP are included to ensure that they have fulfilled this requirement.

For more information about End of Course Exams, please visit the following website:

http://ed.sc.gov/agency/offices/assessment/programs/endofcourse/End-of-CourseExaminationProgramEOCEP.html

Who do I contact?

The South Carolina Virtual School has many helpful employees to help you if you encounter an issue. Below are some of the employees that you may contact when an issue arises:

Dee Appleby - Office of eLearning Director

Email: DAppleby@ed.sc.gov

Phone: 803-734-0794

Terri Ann Bennett - Technical Assistance

Email: TBennett@ed.sc.gov

Phone: 843-522-

Bradley Mitchell - Training

Email: BMitchell@ed.sc.gov

Phone: 843-589-9038

Tracy Sanders - Technology Assessment Assistance

Email: tsanders@oconee.k12.sc.us

Suggestions, Comments or Questions about this newsletter?

Email Bradley Mitchell at BMitchell@ed.sc.gov